

STORY



The Value of Trees in a Community

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COPY

The role of trees in providing beauty and shade in our communities and neighborhoods is widely appreciated. But what is less generally understood are the many vital and often unseen things trees do to make our cities and towns more pleasant and healthful places in which to live.

In the community, trees:

- **Reduce Energy Costs** — Trees have been called the "low tech" solution to energy conservation. Shade from trees reduces the need for air conditioning in summer. In winter, trees break the force of winter winds, lowering heating costs.

Studies have shown that parts of cities without cooling shade from trees can literally be "heat islands," with temperatures as much as 12 degrees Fahrenheit higher than surrounding areas. (*see Illustration G-1*)
- **Clean the Air** — Trees produce oxygen that we breathe. In addition, trees remove air pollution by lowering air temperature, by releasing water into the atmosphere, and by retaining particulates. By reducing the need for heating and cooling systems, trees also reduce emissions that contribute to atmospheric carbon dioxide and the greenhouse effect.
- **Produce Economic Benefits** — Trees add value to retail areas by making them more attractive places for shopping. Trees along streets and on private property increase property values. Studies conducted in two communities in New York and Connecticut showed that the presence of trees increased the selling price of homes by as much as 15 percent. (*see Illustration G-2*)
- **Screen Noise and Undesirable Views** — Strips of densely planted trees and shrubs will not completely remove the annoyance of city noise, but they can significantly reduce it. Urban forestry researchers have shown that even narrow belts of trees can reduce noise by three to five decibels. And, trees can provide privacy or screen out undesirable views.
- **Attract Wildlife** — Trees can provide habitat for songbirds and other desirable wildlife, adding natural sounds and beauty in the urban environment.
- **Slow Runoff and Prevent Erosion** — The leaves of trees break the force of rain, reducing flooding by helping water percolate into the soil instead of quickly running off. Tree roots also help hold the soil in place on steeper hillsides, preventing erosion and improving water quality.

VISUALS

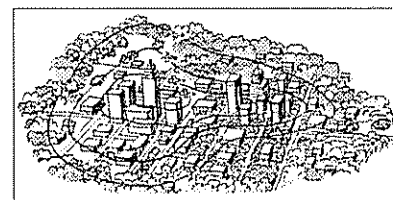


Illustration G-1

Cutline: If it seems hotter in some areas of the city, it's not just your imagination. Treeless areas in cities can be "heat islands," zones of summer temperatures as much as 12 degrees higher than surrounding areas.

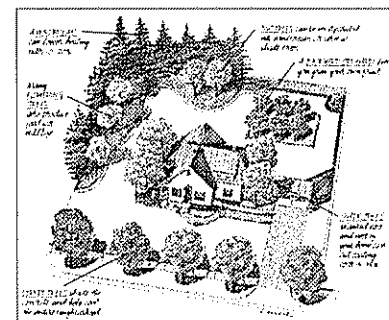


Illustration G-2

Cutline: Trees around your home can increase its value as much as 15 percent. At the same time, they provide shade, produce oxygen, remove CO2 from the air, and give songbirds a home.



Graphics to Accompany Story:

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**National Arbor Day Foundation
Illustrations**

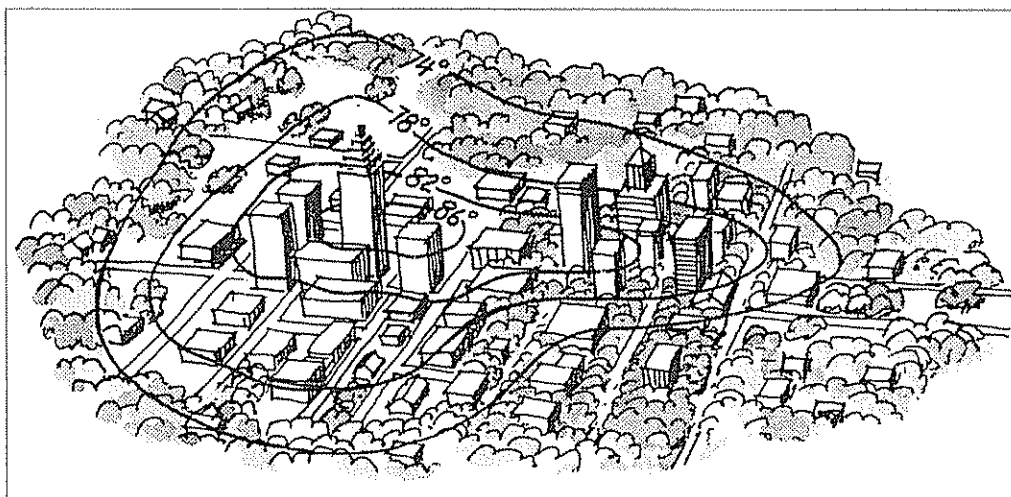


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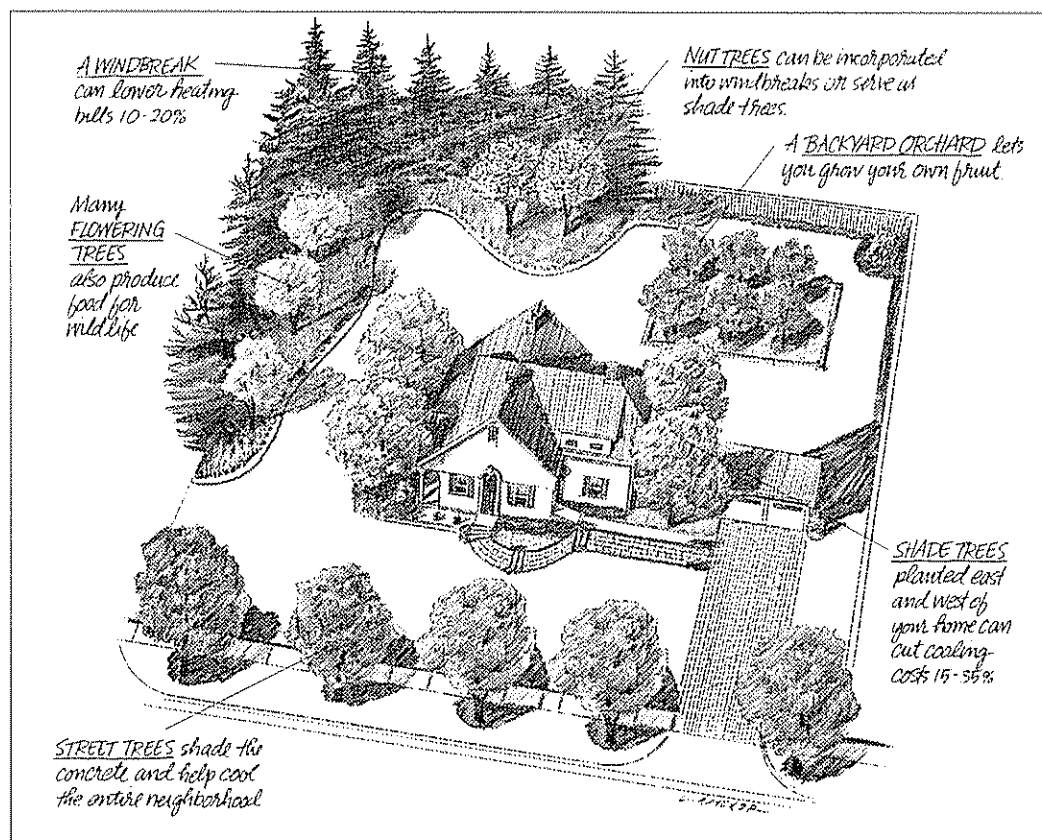


Illustration G-2

Cutline: Trees around your home can increase its value as much as 15 percent. At the same time, they provide shade, produce oxygen, remove CO₂ from the air, and give songbirds a home



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